1:Gallin E-4,5 (1957-1958) 1966
AD5 Taiwan Hokkien AD5

knew she would eventually go blind, "by that time my children will be grown and able to take care of me." In the interim she would not take the time nor spend the money to obtain treatment.

There are several reasons for the high rate of intestinal and parasitic diseases. Although the villagers are aware that water should be boiled before drinking, they actually merely heat it. At the same time they court danger by buying drinks from sidewalk vendors in town. Facilities for washing dishes and other utensils are limited; much of it is done in the nearby pond which serves as the laundry and a bathing place for buffalo as well. Intestinal diseases are also caused by eating raw vegetables which were fertilized with human excrement.

These disorders common in the village do not usually cause alarm. When a familiar illness strikes, the patient may be given some patent or herbal medicine and the illness allowed to run its course. Childhood diseases are common and produce little anxiety. However, there is a fear of diseases whose origin is poorly understood, which produce curious symptoms, and for which no cures are known. When one of these illnesses strikes, a Western-style doctor is called in to administer penicillin or some other drug. The general feeling is that Western medicines, if they are appropriate for the illness, effect fast cures. While many villagers insist that Chinese medicines are just as effective if not more so in the long run, in that they produce a more permanent cure, they readily admit that Chinese medicines are slower to work than Western ones. If the Western medicines fail to help and the patient does not seem to recover quickly enough, or if the illness is very unusual, the villagers conclude that the disorder is caused by some supernatural agent and must be dealt with by magical means. (A detailed discussion of supernatural explanations for illness and the remedies used to cure them is found in Chapter 8.) Most of the diseases prevalent locally are not fatal, and old age seems to be the main cause of death in the Hsin Hsing area.

DEATH, BURIAL, AND MOURNING

The villagers' attitude toward the rituals and ceremonials associated with death vary for the most part with the age and status of the deceased and the economic condition of the family. An old person is almost always given an elaborate, very expensive funeral which entails lengthy mourning rituals. This is also true for a younger adult who leaves children and therefore has status in the community. Young people and children are given a rather simple funeral unless the family is financially well-off. A funeral ceremony is very rarely held for an infant or child under a year old.

The villagers believe that the individual has three spirits. At death

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a member of one's family to suffer and possibly even die without trying every available means to save him?"

As is true of the curing rituals, the ritual that usually follows a fire in the village also has the important function of alleviating anxiety over this constant threat about which the villagers can do little directly. And, similarly, for another ever-present concern, the taking water ritual serves as a form of health insurance. Thus, these rituals also do much to relieve the constant anxieties of the villagers.

The psychological value of the curing rituals to the patient is very obvious. In Western society, when doctors and medicines cannot cure an illness, there is usually little room for further hope except for the minority who believe in practitioners like Oral Roberts or some other faith healer or miracle worker. In rural Taiwan, however, no one need abandon hope at this point, nor feel totally helpless in the face of the unknown. It is always possible and culturally acceptable to attribute the trouble to some supernatural cause and call in a shaman.

There is a possiblity of real psychological benefit for the patient who can be made to believe that the supernatural is truly the cause of his illness and that it is being dealt with by time-tested, traditional means. If he is, in fact, suffering from some psychosomatic illness, the reassurance that everything possible is being done can have very definite value. The shamanistic curing ritual, of course, also focuses attention on the patient. Family, friends, and villagers join together in the hope that their participation will bring about a successful cure. The attention, and the knowledge that the family has willingly assumed a heavy financial burden to have these services performed, can well give the patient a real feeling of worth and contribute to his recovery.

This kind of reaction can be seen in the case of the village girl, discussed above, who "went mad" (*fa feng le*). From the villagers' point of view the powers of the shamans, combined with the help elicited from the gods, together rid the girl of the demons that possessed her. Yet, from the Western point of view, it seems reasonable to assume that the rituals may have brought about their purpose in quite a different way—by making her a center of the attention not only of her family but the entire village, they made her conscious that the entire community valued her and hoped for her recovery. Their solicitude could therefore have relieved some of her anxieties and given her the confidence she needed to get well.

Another contributing factor is related to the very nature of the ritual which is used to exorcise demons. The vehemence of the shaman as he attempts to exorcise a demon is impressive enough to hear, but to be the object of his vehemence must be traumatic indeed. The shaman performs alone in the dimly lit house with the patient, while the family and villagers listen nervously from outside, not daring to come near for fear they will be "hit head-on by the demon" as he flees the

3: Wolf F-5 (1959-1961) 1968 AD5 Taiwan Hokkien AD5
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spending money. Where does this money come from? Does it fall out of the sky?

"When it is my aunt's turn to cook, my mother is always around and she helps her with this and that. When it is my wife's turn to cook, my aunt runs far away and she never helps. She lets her children sit and cry rather than get caught near the work. My wife is slower than the others. Shouldn't Lim Chui-ieng be there to help her a little? Feeding the pigs is a good example. My aunt has never once chopped up the sweet potato leaves for pig food. We don't have many pigs to feed now, but we used to have over thirty. They ate a cartload of sweet potato leaves every day. My mother was so busy chopping that food up and cooking it that she didn't have time to turn around. My aunt never once helped her. Mother isn't as healthy as she used to be. How can she stand to go on working so hard all day long. Yet my uncle says the reason she won't raise pigs anymore is because she doesn't want to bother feeding them. The real reason she wants to quit is this. The last time we sold pigs they should have brought in about NT$8,000, but instead we got only NT$5,000 because we owed the butcher NT$3,000. My uncle was buying pork from him every day. If he bought it for everyone, we wouldn't have anything to say about it, but he doesn't. He buys only the leanest pieces and then they cook it with medicine and he and his family eat the whole lot of it. When he comes back from market, his wife takes the meat and hides it under that new bucket in the washroom. My younger brother has seen them do this too. One day just for fun I yelled to Masa, 'Hurry up and get the new bucket and wash it so we can mix insecticide in it.' My aunt took off at a run to get that meat moved. I didn't really want the bucket, I just wanted to see what she'd do. Masa laughed so hard he had to lie down on the ground."

I asked him if it weren't true that Lim Chui-ieng was not very healthy. She often takes medicines of various kinds. He didn't think so. "Huh! She is just pretending to be sick. Who doesn't know how to do that. If she is not healthy, then no one is healthy. If you have the money, who wouldn't eat tonic [a term for describing meat cooked in wine and rich herbs believed to generally strengthen the body]."

Growing somewhat bolder, I asked A-bok if he found it difficult to get money from his uncle for his personal needs. He answered bluntly, "We don't need to discuss that." After a few minutes, however, he did. "It is this way. When you give him money he is all

3: Wolf F-5 (1959-1961) 1968 AD5 Taiwan Hokkien AD5
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[Lim Chieng-cua's eldest son] not having to do anything. If Kim-hok was bringing honor to the family with his studies, I wouldn't complain about it, but he isn't studying at all. He plays all day long. When I was in the fifth and sixth year of school, I already had to work or the older generations would be scolding me. It wasn't long before I knew what I had to do, and I could do it without being told. Don't think I didn't prefer to play! But, they made me work and I was afraid not to. Children are all this way. If you don't force them to work, then they don't."

A-bok even relaxed enough to gossip about something that seemed to amuse him. "You know, Masa took a look in the account books at the pharmacy, and he says that Uncle has already taken out NT$800 worth of medicine, all hormones."

When I asked why, A-bok laughed and said, "Well, they say hormones are even better than *ginseng* for making you younger. [I think he meant to imply that Lim Chieng-cua was trying to achieve a longer and more energetic sex life.] Haven't you seen him taking shots all the time? He also drinks milk everyday, but then who in his family doesn't? If you say anything about it though, they always say it is because one or the other of them is sick. Our family hasn't the good fortune to have such bad health.

"You know that last quarrel I had with Uncle? If it had been Masa, he wouldn't have yielded and would have fought [physically] with him. Masa doesn't care . . . There was another thing that made Masa really mad. My aunt took all her children to Tapu one afternoon and somehow my son got away and followed them. She bought candy for all her own children and just let my son stand and watch them eat. Now you think about that. Was this 'proper behavior' or not? When her second and third sons were small, my mother took care of them most of the time. They even slept with her. So how can she act this way to my son now? Mother helps her all the time, even now, but she not only doesn't feel indebted to my mother, she thinks that she *ought* to help her. She thinks she ought to do this just like a servant. I tell my mother not to help her. My aunt never helps us do anything. She raises all those ducks and chickens and when they get old enough she won't kill them to eat, but saves them for her own family to eat as 'medicine.' You can see that we don't have very many chickens and ducks even for the big feast days." This is a source of great shame to A-bok's mother who is embarrassed that their pros-

262 than one-quarter of a pound per man per day. It is a rare village household that would have two meatless days in a
178 row. Some older villagers claimed that in their youth,
262 meat appeared on the table only once each week but others claimed it was more often. Any question about economic conditions in the past almost always produced mild argu-
252 ments and disagreements. Pork is cut in very small pieces and mixed with vegetables in cooking and most often, seems
262 to be used primarily for flavoring and for the fat. Vil-
826 lagers agreed that a person needed meat regularly in order to provide grease for the joints in order to prevent sore
262 muscles. It was said that beef (water buffalo or yellow
[231] oxen) was eaten in the city. However, the water buffalo was so important to the villagers that no village man could bring himself to eat it. However, when one was killed in an accident, it would be sold to a meat store. Small boys occasionally snared mountain rats which were eaten but the house rat was considered too dirty to eat.
[757] Dog meat was quite expensive and rarely eaten although everyone said that a bit of dog meat in the fall would help prevent colds all winter. No village dog could be eaten however. Fowl were also significant but only on the special occasions averaging about three to five times per month.

261 According to most Chinese, eating is one of the
252 joys of life and cooking is a well-developed art form.